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OLC 71-2012

19 November 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Director's Conversation with Senator John Stennis
Re Community Reorganization and Upcoming
Committee Briefing

1. On 18 November 1971, in a phone conversation with the Director, Senator Stennis said there was serious concern in his Armed Services Committee over the effect of the recent reorganization on the Director's responsibilities. Senator Stennis said he wanted to be sure that the Director continued to be in charge of CIA proper--that the Director was the only one who had been confirmed by the Senate for this responsibility and Senator Stennis didn't want a military man to run CIA anymore than he wanted the Director to run the Army. The Director agreed.

2. Senator Stennis said that at next week's Committee hearing, the Director should "come prepared for anything" because they had had a blow up in the Committee regarding the problem of oversight in the intelligence community. Senator Stennis said he felt a responsibility as Chairman of the Committee but he had been accused of dereliction of duty and there was a possibility that "he" [presumably Senator Symington] might carry the issue to the floor.

3. Senator Stennis said he had looked into the law and it appeared that the President's powers in such matters are very broad but he wanted to be sure that Mr. Helms continued to run CIA.

4. The Director said he was worried about one problem concerning net assessment. He said Secretary Laird and Mr. Packard were very unhappy over this function being assigned to the NSC. He recalled that under the Eisenhower Administration the net assessment function had been performed in the NSC but under McNamara it was taken over by Systems Analysis in the Pentagon,

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and now it was simply being brought back to the White House. The Director noted that Laird was under the mistaken impression that it had formerly belong to CIA.

5. In conclusion, Senator Stennis said he wanted to make sure that "we keep these things in civilian hands."

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Distribution:

Original - Committee file

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